

AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (Cancelled) A fabric comprising continuous conjugate filaments, each of said conjugate filaments further comprising at least a first filament material and a second filament material that are longitudinally separate into elementary filaments, wherein said first filament material is substantially resistant to acid degradation and said second filament material is susceptible to acid degradation, wherein said second filament material comprises a filament skeleton that has been at least partially reconfigured.
2. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said first filament material is a polyester-like material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polybutylene terephthalate (PBT), polytrimethylene terephthalate (PTT), and polylactic acid (PLA).
3. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 2 wherein said first filament material is polyethylene terephthalate (PET).
4. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said second filament material is a polyamide selected from the group consisting of nylon 6, nylon 6 6, nylon 1 1, and nylon 610.
5. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 4 wherein said second filament material is nylon 6.

6. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 1 wherein said fabric has a nonwoven construction.
7. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 1 wherein the reconfiguration of said second filaments comprises separation of the skeleton into at least two parts.
8. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 7 wherein the reconfiguration of said second filaments comprises separation of the skeleton into at least two parts, in which at least one part has been dissolved.
9. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 1 wherein the reconfiguration of said second filaments comprises removal of at least a portion of the skeleton.
10. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 9 wherein the reconfiguration of said second filaments involves removal of at least a portion of the skeleton due to dissolution.
11. (Cancelled) A fabric comprising continuous conjugate filaments, each of said conjugate filaments further comprising at least a first filament material and a second filament material that are longitudinally separable into elementary filaments, wherein said first filament material is a polyester and said second filament material is a polyamide, and wherein the relative percentage of said polyamide varies per unit of said fabric.
12. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 11 wherein the relative percentage of said polyamide varies from 0.1% to 80%.

13. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 11 wherein said polyamide is selected from the group consisting of nylon 6, nylon 6 6, nylon 1 1, and nylon 610.
14. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 13 wherein said polyamide is nylon 6.
15. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 11 wherein said first filament material is a polyester-like material selected from the group consisting of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polybutylene terephthalate (PBT), polytrimethylene terephthalate (PTT), and polylactic acid (PLA).
16. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 15 wherein said polyester is polyethylene terephthalate (PET).
17. (Amended) A nonwoven fabric comprising continuous conjugate filaments, which further comprise ~~that have been mechanically separated along their lengths into~~ at least a first filament material and a second filament material ~~that are longitudinally separable into elementary filaments~~, wherein said first filament material is a polyester and said second filament material is a polyamide, and wherein said nonwoven fabric has an absorption capacity of at least 5.5 ml/g.
18. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 17 wherein said nonwoven fabric has an absorption capacity of at least 6.25 ml/g.
19. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 17 wherein the nonwoven fabric has an absorption capacity of at least 7.0 ml/g.

20. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 17 wherein said polyamide is selected from the group consisting of nylon 6, nylon 6 6, nylon 1 1, and nylon 610.
21. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 20 wherein said polyamide is nylon 6.
22. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 17 wherein said polyester is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polybutylene terephthalate (PBT), polytrimethylene terephthalate (PTT), and polylactic acid (PLA).
23. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 22 wherein said polyester is polyethylene terephthalate (PET).
24. (Amended) A nonwoven fabric comprising continuous conjugate filaments, which further comprise at least a first filament material and a second filament material that are longitudinally separable separated by mechanical means into elementary filaments, wherein said first filament material is a polyester having hydrolyzed ester groups and enhanced hydrophilic characteristics ~~by having exposed said polyester to a basic solution~~ and wherein said second filament material is a polyamide whose filament structure is eroded ~~by having been exposed to an acidic solution~~.
25. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 24 wherein said basic solution comprises sodium hydroxide.

26. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 24 wherein said polyamide has a structure that has been eroded by having been exposed to said acidic solution, said acidic solution comprising paratoluene sulfonic acid.
27. (Cancelled) The fabric of Claim 24 wherein at least 50% of said polyamide is eroded by having been exposed to said acidic solution.
28. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 24 wherein said polyamide is selected from the group consisting of nylon 6, nylon 6 6, nylon 1 1, and nylon 610.
29. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 28 wherein said polyamide is nylon 6.
30. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 24 wherein said polyester is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polybutylene terephthalate (PBT), polytriphenylene terephthalate (PTT), and polylactic acid (PLA).
31. (Amended) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 30 wherein said polyester is polyethylene terephthalate (PET).
32. (New) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 24 comprising continuous conjugate filaments, which further comprise at least a first filament material and a second filament material that are longitudinally separable into elementary filaments, wherein said first filament material is a polyester having hydrolyzed ester groups and enhanced hydrophilic characteristics and said second filament material is a

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polyamide whose filament structure has been eroded, and wherein said nonwoven fabric has an absorption capacity of at least 5.5 ml/g.

33. (New) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 24 wherein said nonwoven fabric has an absorption capacity of at least 6.25 ml/g.

34. (New) The nonwoven fabric of Claim 24 wherein the nonwoven fabric has an absorption capacity of at least 7.0 ml/g.